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11 April 1958

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED U.S. POSITION ON DISARMAMENT

1. General

This proposed position is much more flexible than the 12 June 1957 position and would have permitted much more effective negotiation in London last year than was possible at that time. On the other hand, the proposal is new and flexible in a purely "technical" sense. There is little or nothing that could be turned into a dramatic political campaign. The real reason for this, however, is that disarmament as such is a highly technical problem, and the number of simple, dramatic issues like "open skies" and "ban the bomb" is severely limited. Furthermore, disarmament is merely one aspect or specialized arena of a broader and much more important problem — the relationship between the USSR and the U.S. Both sides are interested in disarmament only because of the broader problem. The Soviets have taken the initiative in the disarmament field because it suited their general line and also because it gave them an opportunity to talk to us indirectly about the broader problem at a time when it was difficult for them to discuss U.S.-USSR relations directly.

The best way for us to get the initiative back would be to come out with new and dramatic proposals in the field of US-Soviet relations and keep our mouths shut about the specific issues of disarmament. At the same time we should be prepared to follow up our new proposals by further

negotiations in the disarmament field and use the new position recommended here to enable us to show flexibility in negotiations as an earnest of the sincerity of our proposals in the broader field.

2. Specific

a. I am convinced that we would be far likelier to get an agreement if we were free to pair off any two of a wide range of issues. It is good to break the package down into separate chunks, but it might be better to go even further.

b. The nuclear "use" clause on page 2 is just as poor as it ever was, but the added sentence making it non-essential to the agreement takes the curse off it.

c. The Soviets object to our having the right to re-fabricate weapons because we have such a large stockpile that could be modernized. They feel this vitiates the effect of the cessation of manufacture.

d. The clauses at the top of page 4 -- b (1) and (2) -- seem to me to be unnecessary and gratuitously offensive. We can go ahead on both counts as long as we are not prohibited. We don't need a specific permissive statement.

e. Changes in the clauses concerning tests are good.

f. The proposed small European zone is less favorable to the U.S. than is the small European zone proposed by the USSR. I suspect State of maneuvering the Pentagon on this one.

g. Change in paragraph 3 on page 9 is good -- it gives us the initiative to move NATO a little faster.

h. Paragraph 4 at the bottom of page 9 is good.

i. I think the cuts in conventional forces are dangerous if they take place in areas outside of zones of inspection.

j. I don't like the fall back position on inspection of objects placed in orbit. Leaves too much artillery free and uninspected.